

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-33. (Canceled)

34. (Original) A method of delivering energy to ablate tissue, comprising the steps of:
providing a device having an ablating element;
positioning the device at a tissue site, the tissue site having a near surface and a far surface;
measuring a temperature change at the tissue site over a period of time;
analyzing the temperature change to provide a tissue characterization;
and
ablating the tissue in response to the tissue characterization.

35. (Original) The method of claim 34, wherein:
the analyzing and ablating steps are controlled by a control system;
the positioning step is carried out with the tissue site having a near surface and a far surface; and
the ablating step being carried out by maintaining the near surface temperature at a temperature of 0-800C during the ablating step.

36. (Original) The method of claim 34, wherein:
the providing step is carried out with the device having an ablating element; and
the method also including the step of changing the temperature of the tissue with the ablating element; and
the ablating step is carried out with the ablating element.

37. (Original) The method of claim 34, wherein:
the positioning step is carried out with the device being in contact with the epicardium.

38. (Original) The method of claim 34, wherein:
the ablating step is carried out using the results of the measuring step to approximate when the far surface achieves a target temperature.

39. (Original) The method of claim 34, wherein:
the ablating step is carried out with input of at least one variable from a list of variables consisting of presence of fat, amount of fat, flow rate of blood, tissue thickness and temperature of blood.

40. (Original) The method of claim 34, wherein:
the ablating step is carried out with a plurality of ablating elements, wherein no more than 50% of the ablating elements are activated at one time.

41. (Original) The method of claim 34, wherein:
the providing step is carried out with the device having a plurality of suction wells, at least one of the ablating elements being positioned in each of the suction wells.

42 - 49. (Canceled)

50. (Original) A method of creating a continuous ablation lesion in heart tissue, comprising the steps of:

providing a first ablating section and a second ablating section, the first and second ablating sections each having an end and an ablating element;

positioning the first and second ablating sections in contact with the epicardium;

wrapping the first and second ablating sections around at least one vessel;

interlocking the first and second sections to form a closed loop around the at least one vessel.

51 . (Original) A method of creating a continuous lesion in tissue, comprising the steps of:

- providing an ablating device having an ablating element;
- positioning the ablating device in contact with the epicardium;
- ablating tissue to create a first lesion;
- moving the ablating device to a location adjacent the first lesion;
- ablating tissue with the ablating element to create a second lesion which is continuous with the first lesion.

52. (Original) A method of creating a lesion from an epicardial location, comprising the steps of:

- providing a first device and a second device slidably coupled to the first device, at least one of the first and second devices having an ablating element;
- introducing the first and second devices into the pericardial space;
- ablating tissue to form a first lesion with the ablating element;
- moving at least one of the first and second devices relative to the other;
- and
- forming a second lesion after the moving step.

53. (Original) A method of ablating cardiac tissue, comprising the steps of:

- providing an ablating device having an ablating element and a suction well, the suction well being coupled to a suction line which is coupled to a vacuum source, the ablating device also having means for determining when the suction well is adhered to the epicardium;

positioning the ablating device against the patient's epicardium;
adhering the ablating device to the epicardium with the suction well; and
ablating tissue with the ablating element after the adhering step.

54. (Original) The method of claim 53, wherein:

the providing step is carried out with the determining means being a sensor selected from the group of sensors consisting of a flow rate sensor, a pressure sensor and an electric circuit.

55 - 74. (Canceled)

75. (New) A device for ablating tissue, the device comprising an elongate body having an end, the elongate body having at least one ablating element; and

at least one suction well in the body, the at least one suction well being positioned along a length of the body.

76. (New) The device of claim 75, wherein the elongate body has a plurality of ablating elements and a plurality of suction wells.

77. (New) The device of claim 76, wherein the plurality of suction wells are coupled to a suction lumen.

78. (New) The device of claim 77, wherein the suction lumen is formed by a tube attached to the body.

79. (New) The device of claim 78, wherein a fluid outlet is coupled to the suction lumen.

80. (New) The device of claim 76 further comprising a first suction lumen coupled to a first fraction of the plurality of suction wells and a second suction lumen coupled to a second fraction of the plurality of suction wells.

81. (New) The device of claim 75, wherein each suction well surrounds one ablating element.

82. (New) The device of claim 75, wherein each suction well is formed by an inner lip and an outer lip;

and wherein the device further comprises a fluid inlet and a fluid outlet, the fluid inlet and outlet being configured to pass a fluid into and out of a space bounded by the inner lip.